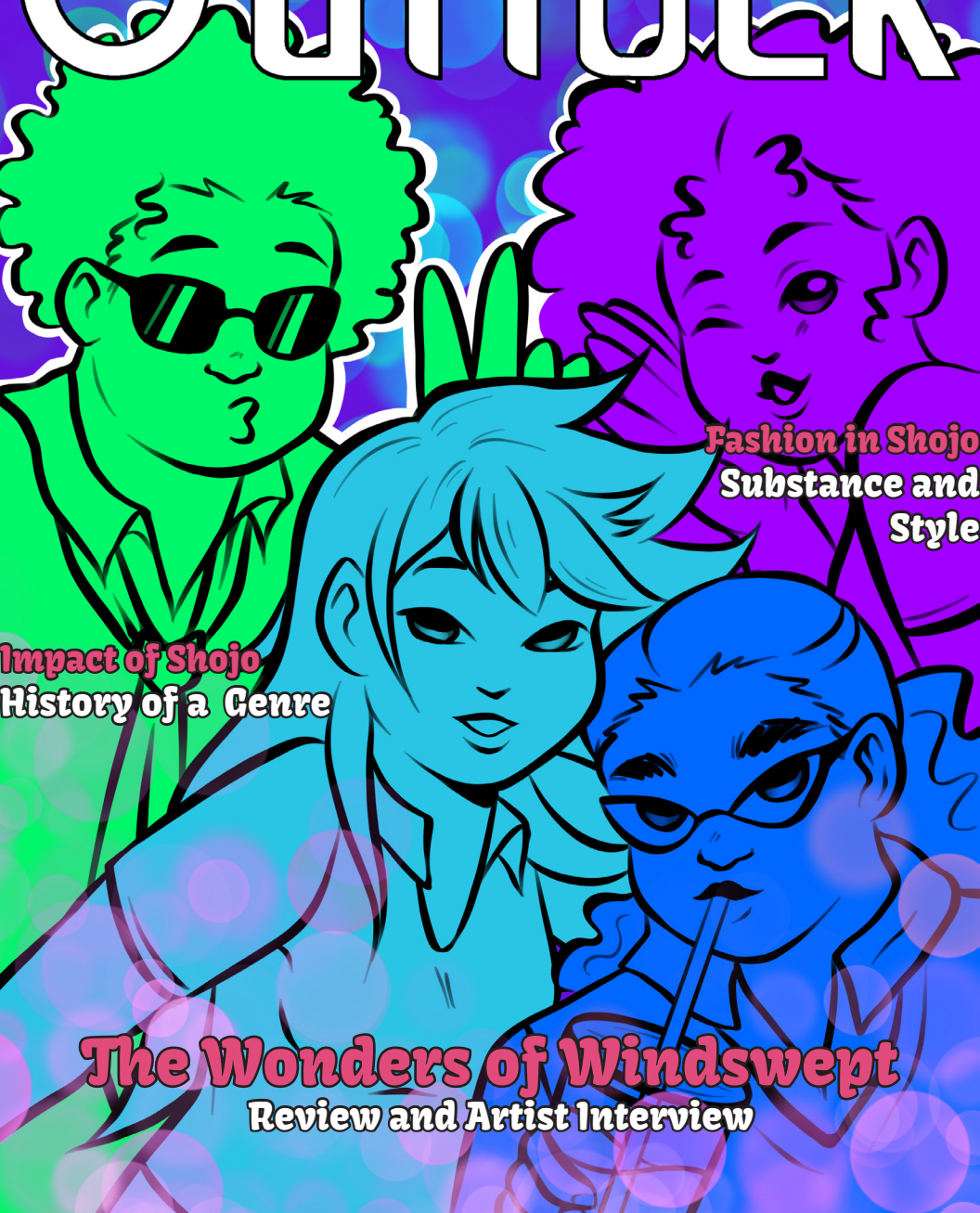


September 2023

# 8otluck



**Impact of Shojo**  
**History of a Genre**

**Fashion in Shojo**  
**Substance and**  
**Style**

**The Wonders of Windswept**  
**Review and Artist Interview**

# Feature: Windswept

## A Spectacular Slice-Of-Life Webseries

By Samantha Sainz-Valdes

We had the pleasure of having an interview with Lori from Kaze Illustrations, the creator of Windswept, where we picked their brain about the creative process. It makes me so immensely happy when creators put their work out there. While I was interviewing them, I was unable to contain my excitement.

Lori created Windswept to realize a childhood dream of theirs. They have been working on it since they were a kid, and as she grew up, these characters grew with her as she kept them in her heart.

Windswept represents an idealized version of school life, where we can be more carefree and fun-loving.

The comic has a lot of classic anime tropes, such as the school festival and beach episode, which adds to the light-hearted storytelling.



Check out Windswept here:



# Windswept Review

**Character:** Windswept has a wide range of characters, and at first, it was a bit overwhelming. However, the full cast makes the school feel lived in, like you're dropping into their day-to-day lives. As the story goes on, you can't deny that they all have real motivations, fears, and dreams. So, as you read, you start to empathize with them, and it feels like you're friends with these characters. Gold (4)

**Plot:** We follow an intelligent but unmotivated student named Rikaito. Due to circumstances, she has to join the student council to avoid getting into trouble. With each passing day, she has proved herself a valuable asset to the student council, often being the main problem solver amongst her peers. In each chapter, she helps her classmates with issues they may be dealing with and changes them for the better. The premise is reminiscent of early 2000s slice-of-life anime, where although the protagonist isn't always perfect, they are always well-meaning and earnest. Their kindness is endearing to everyone around them, even to you, the reader, and makes you want to continue rooting for them. Gold (4)

**Construction:** Although the characters are drawn in a more simplistic style, the care and attention to detail are noticed. If you look closely, you'll realize that there are a lot of different visual gags that elevate the scene further. Even with serious scenes, the art conveys subtlety between characters, making the reader think more thoughtfully about their interaction. Silver (3)

**Theme:** There are a lot of overarching themes depending on the setting and combination of characters. When it comes to the main character, Rikaito, and her growing antics with the student council, you see her gain more of a sense of responsibility as the story continues. When she interacts with her younger brother at home, there's a sense of warmth and familiarity. However, when she's with her older brother, you can feel their underlying tension. Gold (4)

Final Score: Gold (15)



**Grade - Gold**





# The History & Impact of Shoujo Manga



Shoujo has stood the test of time.

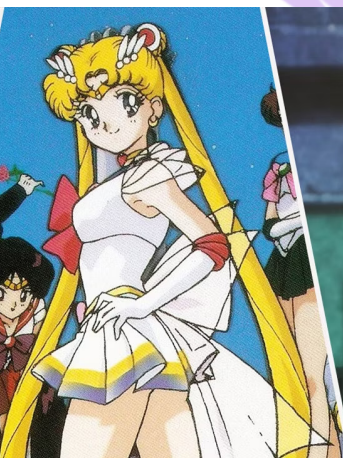


Photo Courtesy of Creative Commons

JQ

Guest Writer

Modern anime and manga are typically broken up by rough target demographics. Two major examples of this are shonen and shoujo. Shoujo manga is manga aimed at teenage girls (Examples include: Sailor Moon, Fruits Basket, Yona of the Dawn) and Shonen is manga aimed at teenage boys (Dragonball Z, Naruto, Fullmetal Alchemist). Of course, women of all ages also enjoy shonen, and men of all ages can enjoy shoujo. This categorization is based on the main demographic the manga is aimed at and the types of magazines the manga runs in.

Shoujo manga is mainly associated with romance in the minds of many, but it actually encompasses a huge variety of genres and artistic styles. Sci-fi, fantasy, action, slice-of-life- all can be found in shoujo manga.

The same rule applies to Shonen.

Yet, like many things aimed at girls, I've seen shoujo manga denigrated and dismissed as lesser. Especially when compared to its shonen counterpart. Yet, shoujo can be every bit as exciting, action-packed and thought-provoking as shonen. So, let's examine the history and impact of the popular genre.

A sort of predecessor of shoujo manga existed pre-World War II in that there were (often single-panel) comedy cartoons featured in Japanese magazines for girls. However, many consider the starting point of shoujo manga to have happened post-war with Osamu Tezuka's Princess Knight. Tezuka, often called the father of manga, created one of the earliest story-driven manga aimed at girls with this tale of a princess who pretends to be a boy so she can inherit her throne. These themes of crossdressing and gender

exploration would be seen in a lot of later shoujo works, like *The Rose of the Versailles* and *Revolutionary Girl Utena*.

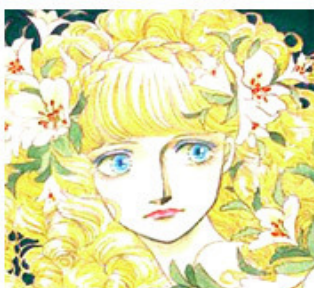
However, girls' comics were initially seen as lesser, even by those who made them. It was mostly men who wrote shoujo manga at that time, and many of those artists considered it something for "rookies" to work on until they got the opportunity to move over to shonen. Academics ignored it. Manga critic Ishiko Junzo admitted shoujo was considered "sub-par" compared to shonen and was "barely researched" at this time.

There were at least a few notable female artists in that era. One of particular note Hideko Mizuno, whose biking-and-rock-music manga *Fire!* contained the first sex scene ever in a shoujo and inspired many later artists. But men still largely dominated shoujo.

That all changed in the 1970s,

thanks to a group of female artists that revolutionized shoujo and greatly impacted manga. This group of artists was called "The Year 24 group" or the "the 49ers" since most of them were born around 1949, the 24th year of the Japanese Showa era. They transformed shoujo into a medium dominated by men to one dominated by women. Interestingly, this shift also coincided with shoujo gaining mainstream popularity and respectability and academic articles being written about it. (Who could have guessed that artists treating stories for girls like a serious endeavor rather than lesser work that's practice for "real manga" would make people more interested in them? Shocking!)

Shoujo manga had primarily focused on innocent pre-teen girls in fantastical settings, but the Year 24 group's comic dipped into more mature themes. This

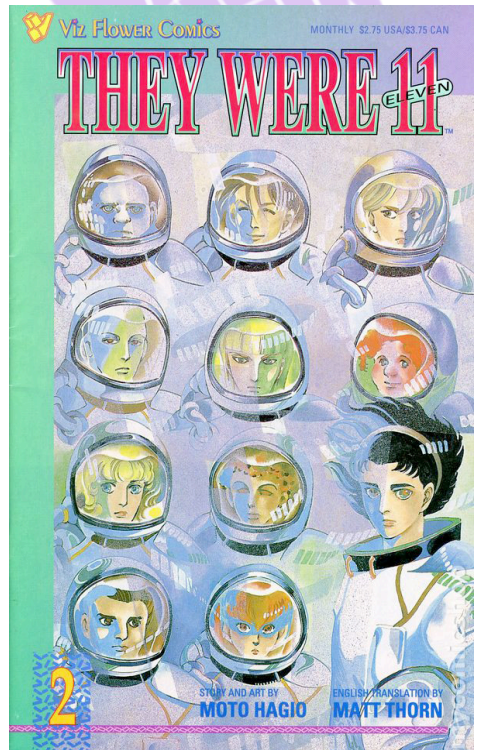




included an in-depth exploration of gender and sexuality (including gay relationships), exploration of mental illness and suicide, and coming-of-age stories. Rather than preteens, glamorous teenagers became the more common protagonists. The subject matter was incredibly varied, ranging from sci-fi to historical drama to sports stories.

These women didn't only experiment with subject matter but artistically as well. These artists shirked the comic conventions of the time. Ignoring the "rows of similarly sized rectangles" layout that was the standard at the time, they would vary panel size, configuration, and shape to convey dramatic emotion and action, going so far as to remove panel borders at times. This experimentation in composition paved the way for the more artistic layouts in modern manga of all genres and demographics.

One of the most influential artists from this group was Moto Hagio. Her work included sci-fi stories like *They Were Eleven*, which told the story of a group of teenagers trapped together on a decommissioned spaceship as a "test" and *A, A Prime*, about a futuristic universe where a humanoid race called "Unicorns" was genetically engineered for space travel. Gender identity and sexuality were explored through the lens of sci-fi in these works, which feature sex changes and intersex characters. The



works are cited as a forerunner to both shoujo and shonen with gender-bending elements like *Ranma ½* and also inspired other sci-fi manga like *Urusei Yatsura*.

Hagio wrote stories in all kinds of genres- other notable works were the historical fantasy about a family of vampires, *The Poe Family*, and the "boys love" story *The Heart of Thomas*. It was the Year 49 group that gave birth to the boy's love genre in manga. They openly depicted relationships between men (though they were pretty much always tragic). Keiko Takemiya, a 49er who was also one of the first women to write shonen manga with her influential sci-fi *Toward the Terra*, published what is thought to be one of the first boys' love works, *In the Sunroom*.

It featured the first male-male kiss in manga.

Other notable works from this group include *From Eroica with Love* by Yasuko Aoiike (a comic take on spy stories), the historical drama *Emporer of the Land of the Rising Sun* by Iyoko Yamagishi, and the tennis manga *Aim for the Ace* by Sumika Yamamoto.

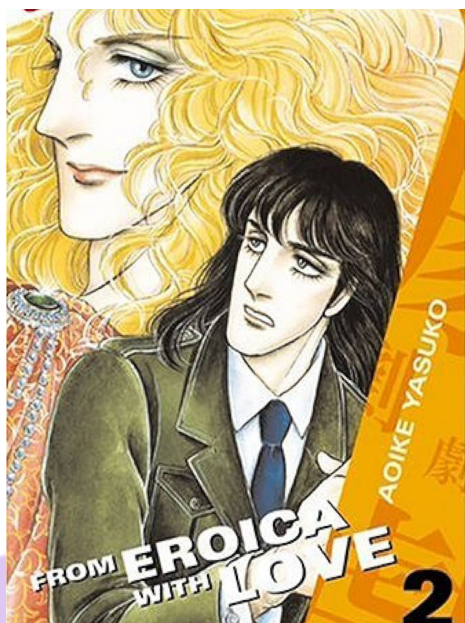
As you can see, the shoujo has genre-spanning influence and innovation. An overview of important sci-fi, fantasy, and action manga that doesn't include the works from the Year 24 group is incomplete. These mangas included every flavor of story, explored taboo subjects and the psychology and agency of women in a way that was unprecedented, and also contained many artistic innovations.

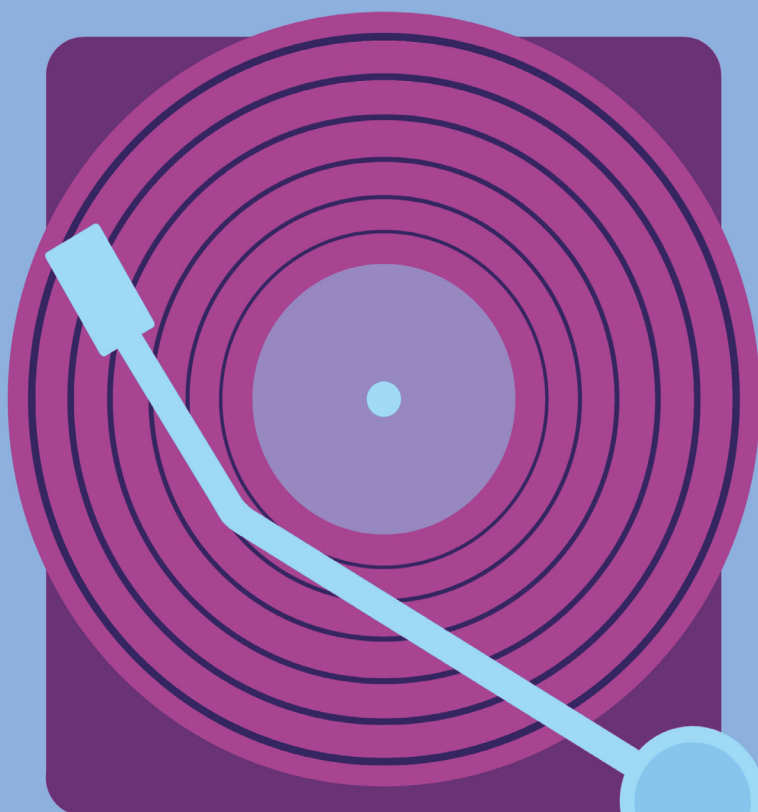
"Girls' love" manga (exploring romantic love between women) also owes its roots to the Year 24 group. Ryoko Ikeda was a big part of what propelled Shoujo manga to mainstream popularity with her wildly popular *The Rose of Versailles* (which received stage adaptation a movie and is still commonly referenced in manga to this day). This manga starred a crossdressing bodyguard to Marie Antoinette named Oscar, who was a "woman raised as a man". It was an action-packed swordfighting manga set around the time of the French Revolution. It explored gender identity, gender roles, class differences, and love between women- several women in the

manga were depicted as being in love with Oscar, including the recurring character Rosalie. Erica Freidman credits this manga and Ikeda's other work, *Dear Brother*, with truly introducing themes of romantic love between women to manga.

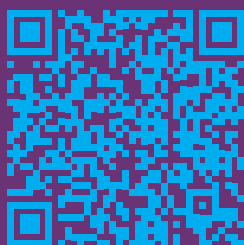
If you'd like to take a look at some of these action-packed tales with dynamic, compelling female leads, check out my article recommending a few shoujo manga in that vein.

I hope this article sheds light on the rich history and artistic importance of shoujo manga. It can't be pigeonholed into a single genre or stereotype, and anyone can find something that appeals to them in the vast number of stories. (There are even a lot of gory shoujo horror comics out there) If you like any type of anime or manga, it's important to respect shoujo.





## Potluck Playlist



### Show Stopping Shojo

As you go through the Shojo  
September Issue of Potluck, let  
the Sakura Blossoms fall into your  
heart!



# SCOOPY-DOO AND ALIENS TOO



In space no one can hear your *ZDINKS*

COMING SOON

# Impact of Video Games on Education



Video Games may provide a new way to educate our students.

Photo Courtesy of Capcom

Derrick E. Jean-Baptiste  
Staff Writer

Education is always in a constant state of flux. One day it takes one shape or form; the next day, it takes another. We are currently in the midst of a change in our current educational system; by the end of this change, could we see textbooks be replaced with video games?

Before we begin, we have to acknowledge that the field we are using, Educational Psychology, is an ever-expanding field of research that has been a mainstay within the realm of academia since its inception.

Due to its longevity, much like education overall, educational psychology

or the study of human learning has had to evolve with the times, utilizing art and entertainment as a learning tool in some cases.

We as a society have always used art and entertainment as a lens we could utilize to learn and experience certain concepts. Over the years, video games have been more accepted as art. Since this is the case, we are now at the point where we can extrapolate educational ideas and concepts from video games.

With the use of video games, academics have the opportunity to harness a new avenue of engaged learning. Generally, engaged learning is when students actively participate in the activity. Students typically research, discuss, create projects, and use technology to

make discoveries based on their choices. With the use of engaged learning, students are active participants in their own learning process. The teacher serves as a “coach or facilitator,” guiding students to the desired goal. As the facilitator for their students, professors and teachers can add the use of video games as a new item in their arsenal. To showcase the power of this new item in the educational arsenal well showcase the inherent benefits of video games in learning.

Many of these early video games were released on home computers. They mostly focused on a singular broad subject. Additionally, a lot of these games tried to take advantage of the action and adventure genres. Simulation games gained popularity later on. High-fidelity simulators, like pilot simulators, attempted to be as accurate as possible. These simulators were more often geared towards teaching adults new skills instead of children. Low-fidelity simulators, like SimCity, were more simplistic and often marketed towards kids.

The late 80's and the 90's saw an explosion of educational games. Companies like Scholastic and The Learning Company were pushing out entire series dedicated to “edutainment.” Grade-specific games like The ClueFinders and Reader Rabbit were quickly gaining in popularity. However, children remained the primary demographic.

Nowadays, major companies are creating educational games geared to both kids and adults. But the number of subjects that modern educational games explore isn't just limited to math, science, and history. Art, music, literature, typing, problem solving, and more all have homes among edutainment. What's more, these games span a variety of different platforms, including consoles, PC, and smartphones.

It isn't all sunshine and rainbows for these educational games. The effect “edutainment” games have on children is not well documented. Not enough research shows they help kids learn better than the traditional methods. Many of these games weren't very good, especially during the '90s boon. Others, like Oregon Trail and Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego? failed to meet their desired outcomes. Oregon Trail was supposed to teach children about the Oregon Trail





and Manifest Destiny. But the developers were so focused on the little details and simulating the circumstances that they completely missed the whole point of the game.

According to Ruth Clark and Richard Mayer(2016), there are four common pitfalls that educational games can stumble into. Sometimes, the difficulty level is too high. Most people wouldn't be able even to play, much less finish these games. Other games try to teach more than one subject and become too cluttered. These games offer too much information at once, and the lessons they attempt to teach become buried. Some games have the opposite problem and don't teach enough. Finally, Clark and Mayer believed that the act of discovery in games often prevents kids from retaining anything they might have learned.

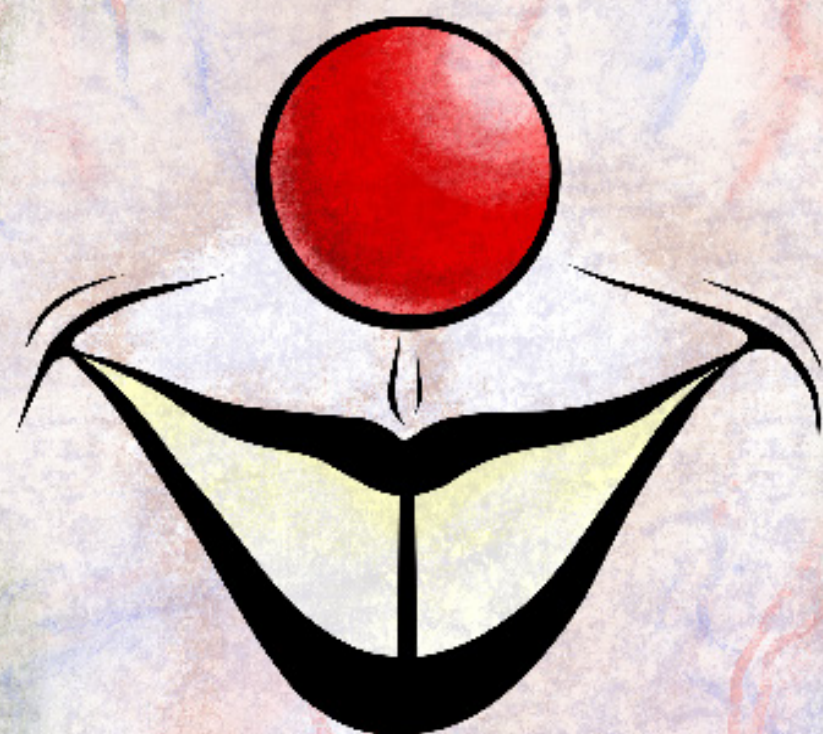
Educational games have their good and bad points. Some people remember these games fondly, and others... not so much. They started off simple, and just like the rest of the video game industry, they have grown and evolved over time. But the power these games offer might make all the difference in the world.

With the use of engaged learning, we can utilize video games to teach as well as introduce humanist theory and empathy training. Empathy is the skill of reflecting on another person's emotions  
12 they are expressing so that

they feel heard and understood. Empathic training revolves around utilizing directed experiences to increase empathic response and productive communication skills. Empathy training has a multitude of different uses and benefits. It rehabilitates violent offenders and prevents aggressive and antisocial behavior in children and adults. It is an essential backbone of professional school education, giving children empathy in training in order for them to react as functional adults as they grow and mature.

Admittedly, the future of video games' role in engaged learning will be controversial. Many people are concerned about the potential negative ramifications of too much gaming. Social interactions can suffer since the gamer spends so much time in the pre-crafted world, eyesight can be damaged if the gamer spends a long time staring at bright screens, and finally, gaming can lead to physical disabilities (i.e. incorrect posture and carpal tunnel.) But if you simply think of video games as a learning aid rather than the chief educator, then a new avenue of learning can be truly impactful for students. The ultimate goal of engaged learning through video games is a healthy and moderate integration of video games as a learning mechanism to assist and aid children of all learning styles and abilities.

**Coming Soon**



**The Big Top**

# Featured Recipe: Creamy Agua Fresca

What's more Shojo than strawberries? This month's feathered recipe features the sweet fruit heavily. Agua Frescas is a Latin American drink that I grew up consuming. It's typically made from fruit, cereal, and even flowers. What better recipe can you create for the love of your life before a misunderstanding throws your simple crush into A SEASON LONG DRAMA, FILLED LOVE ADVENTURE?

## Ingredients:

- 2 Pounds of Strawberries (Hulled)
- 3 Cups of Water
- 5 Cups of Milk
- 1 Can (14.5 Ounces) Sweetened Condensed Milk

## Directions:

- In a blender, add strawberries and 1 Cup of Water. Blend Until Smooth.
- Strain the mixture to remove the strawberry seeds.
- In a pitcher, combine the strawberry mixture, 5 cups of milk, 2 Cups of Water, and the entire can of condensed milk. Mix well.
- Chill in the fridge until ready to serve





# The Mouse Who Couldn't Sleep



Argens Jean-Baptiste

**Check out the newest Children's Book  
from Argens Jean-Baptiste Out Now!**

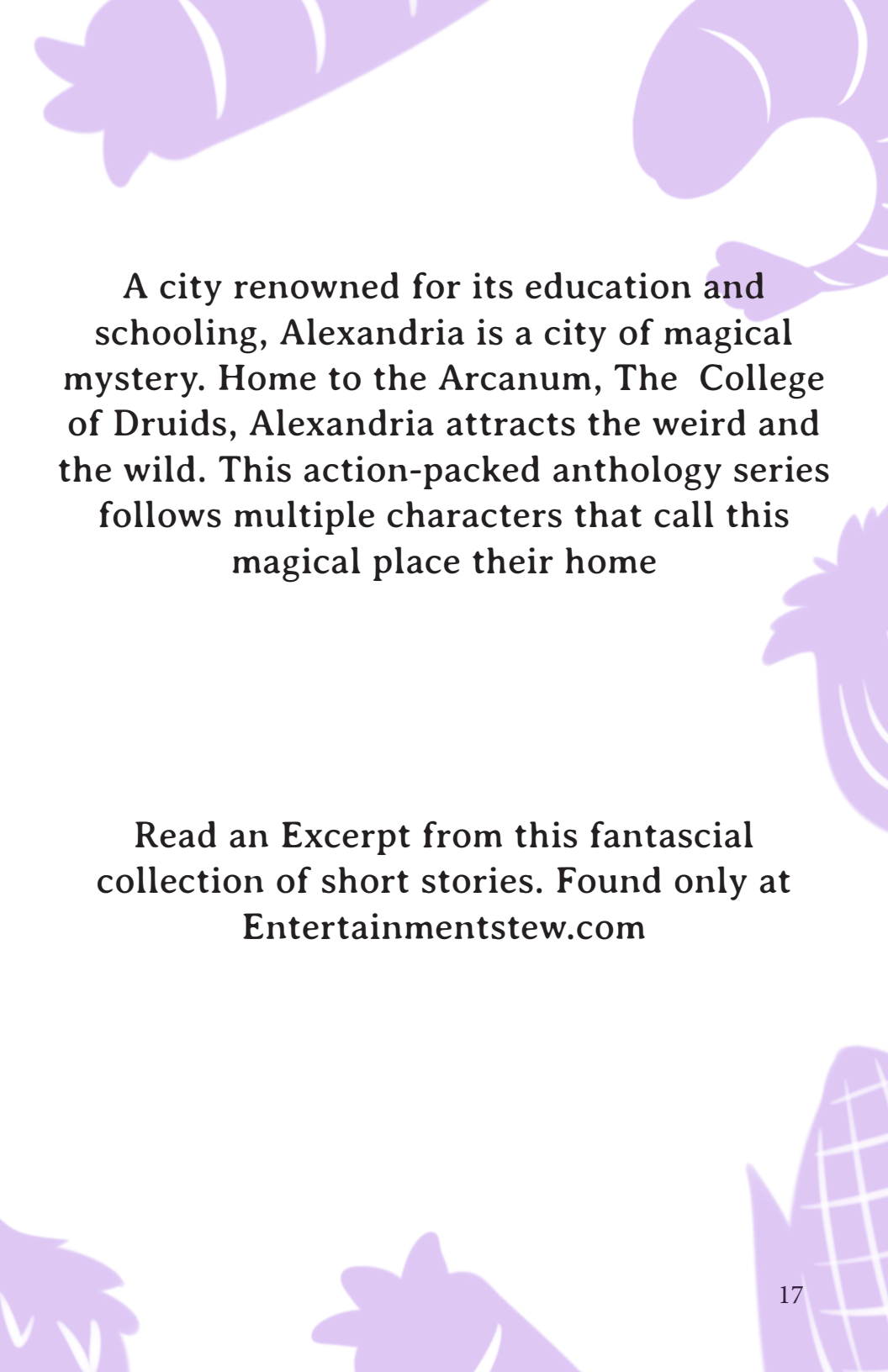


THE WORLD OF VALA:  
TALES FROM ALEXANDRIA



ENTERTAINMENT STEW

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The page is decorated with various purple silhouettes of plants and flowers, including a large flower in the top left, a tulip-like flower in the top right, a palm-like plant on the right side, and several smaller flowers and leaves at the bottom.

A city renowned for its education and schooling, Alexandria is a city of magical mystery. Home to the Arcanum, The College of Druids, Alexandria attracts the weird and the wild. This action-packed anthology series follows multiple characters that call this magical place their home

Read an Excerpt from this fantascial collection of short stories. Found only at [Entertainmentstew.com](http://Entertainmentstew.com)





# Shampoo

**Description:** Damien liked his hair. It never needed any special cleaning but, finding Vera's hair products got him curious.

Damien decided he'd try it. Why not? Everyone else used shampoo. And since Damien found a small bottle of the stuff in Vera's bag, he might as well.

Lather and rinse. Rinse some more to get rid of the weird, slick feeling. Rinse some more to make it go away. But the odd sensation was not going away. Giving up, Damien had gotten out of the shower and gone about the rest of his morning routine. His hair felt so weird. He was never going to do that again.

When he walked deeper into the woods to find a spot to meditate, he first noticed that his head felt much cooler. It had to be the shampoo. Making his hair do stupid stuff, and his head feels weird. The coolness was kinda nice since Damien was always running hot.

But Damien still didn't like it. It felt so odd that he wished he could go back in time and stop himself from using it. It was distracting. When he got to a quiet spot in the forest, he kept stopping because a slight draft would blow through his hair. Typically, these weak breezes wouldn't have even caught his attention.

But his hair was extra clean. It actually moved with the breeze. Air could go through it. Suddenly the blonde top on Damien's head was no longer a yellow helmet. It was... hair.

Damien swore that as soon as he was done with this, he would go roll in the mud or something to make this stupid feeling go away.

He thought that right up until Vera walked into the clearing, she began playing with his hair, as she often did. Ever since they had started training in shifts, Vera had stopped by to see how he was doing, playing with his hair as he worked. It was pretty relaxing for Damien, and Vera seemed to enjoy it.

The girl immediately commented on his hair. “Wow, Damien. Your hair is so soft today.” She leaned in and sniffed it. “Ooh, shampoo. I thought you liked going all-natural, Damien?”

The blonde fox was a little too distracted to answer immediately. His head was very sensitive right now, and he couldn’t find his voice amid the wonderful sensations Vera was causing on his scalp. Damien could feel every finger running through his slick, soft blonde hair, and when she sniffed at it, he could feel her breath and the tip of her nose resting against his hair.

“Damien?”

The man took a breath and recovered himself enough to speak. “Yeah, I got some out of your bag and decided to see what it was all about.”

Although he couldn’t see her, Damien knew Vera was smiling. She continued to mess with his hair, and Damien’s eyes half-closed in bliss. She could not have any idea how good that felt.

When Vera leaned in next to Damien’s ear to whisper to him, he shivered at the closeness. “Hey, Damien. You should use shampoo more often.”

Damien roused himself from his mindless pleasure to respond. “I don’t really like it so much, Vera. It feels all weird.”

Vera ran her fingers agonizingly slowly through his hair, from back to front, then drew her fingertips down his temples and down his neck, stroking his hair with feather-light touches.

Vera walked around Damien and sat in front of him, still touching his hair, putting her face right in his, as she continued to massage his scalp. "I'll make it worth your while, Damien."

From then on, Damien used shampoo.







**A New TCG Coming Soon**

# Style and Substance: Fashion in Shojo



Fashion has always found it's way into Shojo

Photo Courtesy of Creative Commons

By Derrick Jean-Baptiste & Samantha Sainz Valdes

Japanese animation is becoming increasingly prominent in the current connected world. This is not merely a recent development, as anime and fashion have long interacted with one another.

One of the earliest instances of fashion and anime's convergence is via cosplay: the art of dressing up as one's favorite anime character. Gaining traction in the 80s, many cosplayers would excitedly attend conventions such as

Comic Con and Anime Expo to show off their anime-inspired costumes—viewing these events as a welcoming home for their passion. These conventions also were one of the few ways to acquire anime merchandise.

Characters from popular series, including Dragon Ball, Naruto, and Pokémon were plastered onto t-shirts, hats, keychains, stickers, etc. Once viewed as niche and nerdy, Japanese animation has now become a global phenomenon enjoyed by many due to its complex storylines, creative visuals, and relevance to modern-day

issues. Anime has transcended such preconceptions and has even become viewed as a cool interest, making it a major driver of youth culture and fashion. But before Japanese cartoons could find their place in the fashion realm, anime artists were looking at Parisian runways for inspiration.

Naoko Takeuchi, the creator of the illustrious anime *Sailor Moon*, often fashioned her heroines based on the couture of her time. From Princess Serenity's Dior-inspired Palladium gown to *Sailor Saturn*'s black bow ensemble from Mugler's 1992 fall/winter collection, Takeuchi brought the runway to her animated world.

In addition to fusing her fantastical story with high fashion looks, casual attire such as high-rise denim, cropped cardigans, color-blocked varsity

jackets, and knitted turtlenecks were seamlessly incorporated into the daily lives of the *Sailor* crew. When fighting villains, the sailor schoolgirls activated powers that resulted in an alteration of clothing. As the girls underwent their iconic transformations, their outfits typically generated more frills, ribbons, and hearts—embracing the ideal that femininity can be a source of empowerment. This sentiment resonated with a generation of young girls, motivating them to adopt the styles seen in the show confidently.

In contrast to the preppy and high-chromatic ensembles sported by the magical femme-fighters, Ai Yazawa's series *Nana* included alternative looks that were suited for early 2000s misfits. *Nana* tells the story of two girls named Nana who both





## Junko's Room SP



left their small towns to pursue a better life in the bustling city of Tokyo. One-half of the protagonist-duo, Nana Osaki, aims for musical stardom as the vocalist of her rock band BLAST. From her wine-red lips to her smudged eyeshadow, Osaki's glam-punk rock style made her an anomaly amongst her peers. Her unique look, as well as her cool confidence, captivated those around her. Seeing Nana as a visual guide for style, young girls looked up to the way the character rejected uniformity.

In the same way that rebellious girls of the 2000s were influenced by Nana, creator Ai Yazawa first looked towards Vivienne Westwood's runway shows for inspiration. A long-time admirer of the designer, Yazawa got permission from Westwood to dress her characters head-to-toe with pieces from the London-based innovator. Nana Osaki regularly flaunted Westwood's "Sovereign Orb" logo in the form of earrings, chokers, and safety pins. The now best-selling "Armour Ring," a massive silver ring that made an appearance in the first episode of the series, gave viewers a preview to the defiant style that was going to be present throughout the story.

From illustrated drawings to the hands of courtiers, today's youth are merging two dimensions. Having come full circle, designers are introducing the next generation of youth to the art that 80s and 90s kids were influenced by. As anime continues to bleed into fashion, we can look forward to exciting collaborations and collections, as well as more outlets of self-expression.

World of Vala



HEIR

of

Veleno Mansion